

REMARKS

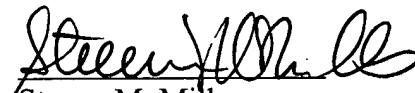
Claims 1, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kondo (U.S. Patent No. 6,010,947). Claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 13-15 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo. In view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks, the rejections are respectfully traversed, and reconsideration of the rejections is requested.

Claims 2, 4, 7, 8, 12, 16 and 17 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2, and claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 12. Claims 2 and 12 have been canceled. With these amendments, all claims pending in the patent application incorporate allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that the claims are allowable over Kondo, and reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and of claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 13-15 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kondo is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendments to claims and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that all claims pending in the application (claims 1, 3-11 and 13-18) are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully solicited. If a telephone conference will expedite prosecution of the application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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